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DRUG FREE WORKPLACE COULD INCREASE PERFORMANCE AND PROFITS

The U.S. Department of Labor announced Drug Free-Work Week 2008 from October 20-26. The purpose is to educate employers, employees and the general public about the importance of being drug-free in the workplace.

According to a Federal government survey, the construction industry has some of the highest rates of alcohol and drug abuse. Construction workers who abuse alcohol and drugs are dangerous not only to themselves, but also to their colleagues and the general public. Safety in the construction industry is high priority and for this reason, many construction firms are taking necessary steps to build better workforces by proactively addressing workplace substance abuse and decreasing potentially disastrous consequences.

A drug-free workplace program includes: a policy; training for supervisors; training for employees; assistance or support to employees who have problems with alcohol and other drugs; and drug testing.

The report indicates that among construction workers between the ages of 18 and 49:

- More than 12 percent report illicit drug use during the past 30 days.
- 25 percent report illicit drug use during the past year.
- Approximately 20 percent admit to heavy alcohol use.

Intervention

When an employee's performance deteriorates for whatever reason, his or her supervisor has an obligation to intervene.

However, the supervisor does not need to be an expert on alcohol and drug abuse because the intervention should be focused on the employee's performance problem. Remember, not all performance problems are related to substance abuse.

Some suggestions for supervisors confronting a staff member about a performance problem are:

Maintain control

- Stick to the facts as they affect work performance.
- Do not rely on memory; have all supporting documents and records available.
- Do not discuss alcohol or drug use.

Be clear and firm

- Explain company policy concerning performance.
- Explain company drug-free workplace policy.
- Explain consequences if performance expectations are not met.

Be supportive, but avoid emotional involvement.

- Offer help in resolving performance problems.
- Identify resources for help in addressing personal problems.

Drug-free workplace programs help employers take steps to protect themselves and their employees against negative consequences in the workplace. For more information on how you can make your workplace drug-free, go to www.dol.gov/asp or call 1-866-4-USA-DOL.

If interested in customized on-site class, contact **Bruce Anderson** at:
bruce@safetycenter.org



SAFETY CENTER'S FIRST, FIRST 72, A MUST DO CLASS

It was a beautiful, September day in Sacramento, when in the small town of Safetyville USA, there suddenly was a disastrous earthquake. The class members of the "First 72 Hours," jumped into action. Who should be treated first? Where's the water and food? Where are the medical supplies? **WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE INJURED THAT KEEP MOANING IN PAIN** and those who suddenly die?

Those were some of the questions that students grappled with during the simulated emergency preparedness class, presented by the Safety Center. Classroom instruction focused on major trauma skills including, crushing injuries, dismemberment and what to do with "bodies." "We had people physically transport people to understand the difference between transporting a dummy and a live human being," said Safety Center senior instructor, Bruce Anderson. The class also taught responders to work as a team, "moving as one."

Instructors focused on the earthquake threat to California, the legal issues surrounding workplace evacuations, having an emergency response plan,

www.safetycenter.org

